



# Center Point

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## Special Honor for a Special Lady



The New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau honored Mary Ellen McGuire, part-time tourism information counselor at the New Orleans Welcome Center, with a Champion of Tourism award at the CVB's annual Tourism Week Luncheon. She has worked for the Office of Tourism since 1997. McGuire is a New Orleans tourism expert many turn to for information about New Orleans and Louisiana history and geography. Her supervisor describes her as "a living Cabildo."

Her smile and her enthusiasm for the state and the city she calls home is infectious. McGuire interacts with visitors in a humorous and informative way. She is described as a classy lady, a *grand dame* of Louisiana tourism loved by everyone.

In accepting her award, McGuire explained her position by saying, "I am a tourism Information counselor—a T.I.C. I'm a TIC—and I love my job because it keeps me ticking!"  
Congratulations, Mary Ellen!



### One Good Visit Deserves Another

When Grace Silverstein, northern Region coordinator, and Niecy Martin, travel counselor, volunteered to be a part of the Queensborough Elementary School Louisiana Day festivities, they had no idea the students would follow up so quickly with a visit to the Greenwood Welcome Center.

Grace was a Queensborough student there at one time, and Niecy's mother taught at the school, so it was easy to share Louisiana history and culture with the students on April 20 as they celebrated the state's Bicentennial with Louisiana Day. Each student shared a Louisiana-themed project like handmade versions of the State Capitol, Mardi Gras and Louisiana crop displays.



### Surprise!

The staff at the Slidell I-10 West Welcome Center got some unexpected help from a well-versed source recently. Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne stopped by for a couple of hours on May 24, donned a bowling shirt like other counselors and worked alongside them. The Lt. governor's extensive knowledge of Louisiana history, politics and literature is well-known, and his lectures and stories based on these topics are both informative and entertaining.



"We were extremely happy with the Lieutenant Governor's surprise visit. He was very charismatic and enthusiastic about tourism in Louisiana. He interacted with and delighted our visitors," Michelle Lockwood, supervisor of the Slidell facility, said.

Front row, from left: Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne, Rose Overall, Shirley Cook, Gwen Hopper, Barbara Catalanotto. Rear: Michelle Lockwood, Susan Crawford, Evelyn Brown, Pat Torrence (St. Tammany Parish) and Zereda Crawford.



## Origin of Louisiana Visitors

Top Countries					Top States		
Canada—2,558					Louisiana—33,138		
Germany—1,247					Texas—16,057		
England—1,002					Mississippi—9,459		
France—975					Alabama—6,905		
Mexico—785					Florida—5,319		
APRIL	New Orleans	Slidell	Pearl River	*Kentwood	St. Francisville	State Capitol	Atchafalaya
2012	13,684	25,563	10,691	800	1,173	17,817	13,834
2011	10,114	21,046	10,735	7,985	1,317	16,412	10,946
APRIL	Capitol Park	Greenwood	Vidalia	Mound	Vinton	Alexandria	Totals
2012	233	8,979	1,156	5,784	9,908	7,292	390,788
2011	263	8,745	2,307	5,808	10,923	7,212	390,535

Center Point is published by the Louisiana Welcome Centers, Office of Tourism, as a service to our CVB/Tourist Commission stakeholders in Louisiana. For information call 225-342-8122 or email [welcomecenters@crt.la.gov](mailto:welcomecenters@crt.la.gov).

\*Kentwood Welcome Center is closed. Visitation numbers come from Tangipahoa Parish Tourist Commission.

Top Five Cities—April 2012

Statewide All Centers	Baton Rouge 4,686	Houston 2,064	Mobile, AL 1,865	Shreveport 1,845	New Orleans 1,712
New Orleans	Indianapolis 622	New Orleans 461	Davis, CA 130	New York 119	Carriere, MS 105
Slidell	Mobile, AL 1,596	Ocean Springs, MS 682	Pensacola, FL 512	Spanish Fort, AL 472	Biloxi, MS 471
Pearl River	Hattiesburg, MS 1,075	Waynesboro, MS 342	Laurel, MS 265	Abbeville 200	Birmingham, AL 149
Kentwood (Closed 09.15.2011)	Hammond 76	Dover, AR 17	Chicago 16	Jackson, MS 15	Ponchatoula 13
St. Francisville	Baton Rouge 139	Natchez, MS 74	Monroe 63	Denham Springs 47	St. Francisville 34
State Capitol	Baton Rouge 3,016	Shreveport 603	Pineville 579	New Orleans 462	Gonzales 386
Atchafalaya	Lake Charles 920	Baton Rouge 536	Lafayette 491	Houston 265	Breaux Bridge 243
Capitol Park	Baton Rouge 21	Iowa City, IA 10	Rockford, IL 8	Madison, WI 8	Longville 6
Greenwood	Shreveport 703	Bossier City 538	Tyler, TX 313	Dallas 215	Bullard, TX 166
Vidalia	Vidalia 152	Natchez, MS 87	Houston 51	Jena 36	Baton Rouge 24
Mound	Fort Campbell, KY 300	Columbus, MS 116	Jackson 72	Perry, FL 59	Brandon, MS 56
Vinton	Houston 1,084	Austin, TX 303	San Antonio 179	Spring, TX 126	Orange, TX 122
Alexandria	Shreveport 406	Bossier City 298	Baton Rouge 221	Alexandria 196	Lafayette 184

Top Five International-April 2012

Statewide All Centers	Canada 2,558	Germany 1,247	England 1,002	France 975	Mexico 785
New Orleans	Canada 674	Germany 544	France 469	England 388	Australia 184
Slidell	Canada 610	Germany 337	England 129	France 86	Netherlands 54
Pearl River	Canada 155	Germany 25	France 15	Mexico 14	Australia 11
Kentwood (Closed 09.15.2011)	Australia 48	Canada 19	England 15	Germany 8	Italy 8
St. Francisville	France 46	Norway 26	Canada 24	Germany 16	England 15
State Capitol	England 298	Australia 270	Canada 235	Germany 158	Norway 122
Atchafalaya	Mexico 443	Canada 191	France 101	England 58	China 45
Capitol Park	Canada 14	Australia 8	France 6	Denmark 2	Germany 2
Greenwood	Canada 87	Germany 19	Netherlands 12	Australia 10	Norway 10
Vidalia	France 46	Canada 32	England 14	Germany 6	Australia 5
Mound	Canada 54	Japan 12	Germany 10	Philippines 8	England 7
Vinton	Canada 439	Mexico 150	Australia 102	Germany 78	France 70
Alexandria	Canada 24	Germany 9	France 7	England 6	Australia 4

Figures represent visitor sign-ins for April 2012.